



## SULLY SPOTLIGHT

April 2006



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### Events of Interest for April 2006

- ♦ **Sunday, April 2—  
Daylight Savings  
Time begins**
- ♦ **Mon., April 17—Tax  
Day (extended this  
year)**
- ♦ **Wed., April 26—  
Administrative  
Professionals Day**



## April is *Child Abuse Prevention Month*

Each day in the United States, more than four children die as a result of child abuse in the home. More than three-quarters (78.7 percent) of the children who die are younger than four years old. In 2003, an estimated 1,500 children died of abuse and neglect—an average of more than four children per day. Of these fatalities, 89 percent were under the age of eight, 43.6 percent of the children were under the age of one.

Homicide is the leading cause of injury deaths among infants (under one year of age) in the United States. Overall, it is the 15th leading cause of infant mortality from all causes. Homicide risk is greater in the first year of life than in any other year of childhood before age 17. Perpetrators are typically the mother, father or stepfather. Infants are most likely to be killed by their mother during the first week of life but are more likely to be killed by a male (usually their father or stepfather) thereafter.

In 2003, 48.3 percent of child victims were male; 51.7 percent of victims were female. Of these victims, 83.9 percent were abused by a parent. Also, 40.8 percent of child victims were maltreated by their mothers acting alone; another 18.8 percent were maltreated by their fathers acting alone; 16.9 percent were abused by both parents. Types of maltreatment included neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological maltreatment, medical maltreatment, abandonment and congenital drug addiction.

Wear a Blue Awareness ribbon and help share the message: *Children deserve to be safe and everyone is responsible for keeping them safe.*

Information from <http://www.childhelpusa.org> and  
[http://www.cardinalmccloskeyservices.org/blue\\_ribbon.shtml](http://www.cardinalmccloskeyservices.org/blue_ribbon.shtml)





## *How the Blue Ribbon Campaign Began - Bonnie Finney's Story*

Dear Advocate for the Child:

NO! It isn't true! It simply cannot be true! They are telling me that my grandson is dead ... they are wrong! There must be some mistake ... Michael is fine ... but deep in my heart, I knew it was true for I have not seen him in weeks. It's been so long since I sat by his side in the hospital. Of course I knew something was wrong as I sat there. I saw fear on his face, the bruises on his body, and the healing cigarette burns on his hands. His doctor did not believe my daughter's story ... "he fell in slippery water in the bathtub" ... I felt sick ... I didn't understand ... Are my granddaughters all right, was all I thought. Where are they?

I only had one child. She was a beautiful little girl. She was the light of our eyes. We knew she had entered into a stormy marriage, for we brought her home several times in the five years the marriage lasted. We suspected heavy use of drugs ... BUT ... in those five years, three beautiful, healthy children had been born. I loved them dearly, and they loved me. The children were 16 months, three years and four years old.

After the ordeal at the hospital, my grandson was placed in foster care for three weeks. He cried when they came to take him back to his mother. He told his foster mother, "my momma doesn't love me," and he begged to stay. I ached for his dilemma. I was not physically able to care for him. The courts seemed to believe that home was the best place for him ... but I knew better and I told ... no, begged them not to return him to his mother. But I was overruled. My instinct as a grandmother did not count.

I never saw Michael again. My 16-month-old granddaughter was hospitalized after being beaten severely ... her leg was broken in four places, and her hand burned from the tip of her little fingers to her wrist. It was only then that the search was on for Michael. We learned that he had been killed, wrapped in a sheet, stuffed in a tool box and dumped into a dismal swamp three months earlier.

My grandchildren had suffered and battled so much throughout their young lives that it sickened me. My life was turned into physical and mental chaos. My efforts to understand became a plea to stop abusing children. I tied a blue ribbon on my van antenna to make people wonder. It caught on locally with restaurants, businesses, the police department and radio and television stations. They all started supporting me in my efforts to make a real awareness campaign.

Why the color blue? I never intend to forget the battered, bruised bodies of my grandchildren. Bruises are black, then eventually blue. Therefore, blue serves as a constant reminder to me to fight for our children. Everyday, I pray that our children will be allowed to hear the sounds of a different drummer.

Join with me ... we must protect our most precious gift of all ... our children. Please wear a blue ribbon ... put one on your car ... give one to your friends ... tell them what it means ... you may be saving a child's life! If you suspect anything is happening to your children ... your grandchildren ... the child next door ... PLEASE ACT! If you don't get any results or a response, please try again. You may not hear their screams ... you may not see their bruises ... so check for the pain and screams in their eyes.

# *The Choking Game*

***The Choking Game, Space Monkey, Tingling, Gasp, Funky Chicken, Fainting, Pass Out Game, Black Out Game, American Dream, Flatliner, Space Cowboy, Knock Out, Gasp, Rising Sun, Airplaning, Hawaii High, Fainting Game, Suffocation Roulette.*** These are all names synonymous for the same deadly “game” that children are playing. The word “game” is what kids call it. It is in no way a game.

What is the Choking Game? It is a risky behavior that is killing children, frequently in the 9 to 16 year range, though there are instances of children both older and younger who have been injured or died. The Choking Game achieves a brief high or euphoric state by stopping the flow of oxygen containing blood to the brain. Sometimes children choke each other until the person being choked passes out. The pressure on the arteries is then released and blood flow to the brain resumes causing a “rush” as consciousness returns. The danger becomes even greater when a ligature is used and the activity is performed by a lone child. If the child loses consciousness and there is no one there to *immediately* release the pressure, he is unable to help himself. The child will suffer brain damage and death after three minutes.

Why do kids play this deadly “game”? Some do it for the high which can become addictive. Others do it because it’s “cool” and risky. Most of the kids who have died from this across the country were not children in trouble. This was an activity they felt was safe. Children have no concept of their own mortality. They truly believe nothing can hurt them.

What are the signs parents should look for to indicate their child may be involved in this activity?

- ♦ Inexplicable marks or bruises on the throat.
- ♦ Frequent severe headaches.
- ♦ Redness of the eyes.
- ♦ Belts, leashes, ropes or shoelaces tied in strange knots or found in unusual locations.
- ♦ Unexplained cuts or bruises from falling.
- ♦ Disorientation after spending time alone.
- ♦ Locked bedroom doors.

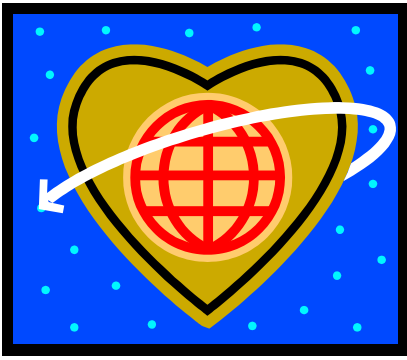
This activity has been going on for generations. In a group of adults, one can almost always find someone who played this game in some form or another when they were children. The newer modification that has made it even more dangerous is the use of ligatures and the practice of doing it alone. This “game” is never safe, but most of the children who get into trouble are alone.

What can you do to help stop this growing epidemic among children? Talk to the children in your life, other parents and everyone you know who works with children. Even if you do not have children of your own, you can help educate those in your life. Make sure they understand why it is so dangerous to participate in this activity. Elementary aged children need to be talked to about this activity. It is not a teenage phenomenon.

For more information, visit the following websites:

<http://www.stop-the-choking-game.com> (article information courtesy of this site)

<http://www.deadlygameschildrenplay.com>



# Earth Day

## Earth Day

### April 22, 2006

Earth Day was first observed in spring of 1970. An estimated 20 million people nationwide attended festivities out of which came the largest grassroots environmental movement in U.S. history and the impetus for national legislation like the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. By the twentieth anniversary of that event, April 22, 1990, more than 200 million people in 141 countries participated in Earth Day. There are many things we can do in our daily lives to help protect the earth. It does not have to occur on just one day or month a year.

Protecting the county's natural environment and conserving appropriate open space are important county goals. Achieving these goals requires the care and attention of county agencies and residents alike. The Board of Supervisors have endorsed a 20-year environmental vision plan. The Board of Supervisors shaped its plan to protect and enhance the environment around two principles:

- 1) Conservation of our limited natural resources must be interwoven into all government decisions.
- 2) The Board must be committed to provide the necessary resources to protect our environment.

The plan is organized into six areas, including: growth and land use; air quality and transportation; water quality; solid waste; parks/trails/open space; and environmental stewardship. To get additional information on the Board's plan visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/env\\_excel.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/env_excel.htm)

Start a community project or build a partnership with local businesses. Visit the following sites for ideas and help in getting started.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov/earthday/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/earthday/index.htm)

Clean Fairfax Council: [www.cleanfairfaxcouncil.org](http://www.cleanfairfaxcouncil.org)

Volunteer Fairfax: [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org)

Keep America Beautiful Inc.: [www.kabspo.com](http://www.kabspo.com)

By MPO Vincent DarConte

Sources: Fairfax County web page, The Library of Congress

## *Sully District Station Child Seat Inspections*

Is your child seat installed properly? Is it the correct seat for the child's age and weight? Did you know that your Sully District Station offers free child seat inspections by certified technicians?

Next available dates:	Thursday, April 6, 2006	5:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, April 11, 2006	5:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
	Thursday, April 20, 2006	5:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, April 25, 2006	5:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.



No appointment is necessary. Our technicians request that you make an effort to install your child safety seats yourself, so that they may properly inspect and make adjustments, as necessary. For additional child seat inspection times, you may call the Fairfax County Operations Support Bureau at 703-280-0559.

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## *Traffic Trivia*

**Code of Virginia § 46.2-830. *Uniform marking and signing of highways; drivers to obey signs; enforcement of section.***

The Commonwealth Transportation Board may classify, designate, and mark state highways and provide a uniform system of marking and signing such highways under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth. Such system of marking and signing shall correlate with and, so far as possible, conform to the system adopted in other states.

All drivers of vehicles shall obey lawfully erected signs.

No provision of this section relating to the prohibition of disobeying signs or violating local traffic signals, markings, and lights shall be enforced against an alleged violator if, at the time and place of the alleged violation, any such sign, signal, marking, or light is not in proper position and sufficiently legible to be seen by an ordinarily observant person.



## *CAC CORNER*

The Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) will not meet in April due to the budget hearings at the Fairfax County Government Center. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 16 at the Sully District Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Boulevard. If you live or work in the Sully District, you are encouraged to attend this meeting. Your voice does make a difference. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!



Sully District Police Station  
4900 Stonecroft Boulevard  
Chantilly, VA 20151

Main Phone 703-814-7000  
Fax 703-814-7013

File a Report on Line  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ps/police/homepage.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ps/police/homepage.htm)

Virginia Amber Alert  
<http://www.vaamberalert.com>

Aggressive Driving—  
Report Online at  
[https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ps/police/traf\\_sfty\\_report.htm](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ps/police/traf_sfty_report.htm)



#### PHONE NUMBERS

**Fairfax County Crime Solvers :**  
1-866-411-TIPS

**Fairfax County Police Non-Emergency:**  
703-691-2131

**Sully District Crime Prevention Office:**  
703-814-7018

**Child Car Seat Installation:**  
Sully District Station  
703-814-7000 x 5140

**SAFE (Self Defense Class)**  
703-246-7806

**Citizen Reporting System (to file reports only )**  
703-464-4756

**CRIME  
FLASH**

## The Crime Triangle- Break the Link!

With the onset of warm weather, the Sully District has seen a rise in vandalism, vehicle tampering and larcenies. Crime does not know boundaries. It can move from neighborhood to neighborhood if the right elements are in place. The crime triangle shows the three elements crimes need to be carried out.



It is difficult to remove a criminal's ability or desire. However, as an individual and a community you can remove the opportunity and harden the target. What constitutes an opportunity to the criminals? There can be so many but the common ones are an open gate or door, leaving valuables near an open window or on the seats of a car, parking in dark places, hanging a bag over the shoulder, etc. When crime becomes so common and yet you not act to protect yourselves, the criminals see you as soft or easy targets. They continue to target you. To stop this, the targets have to be hardened. BE ON ALERT at all times.

One way to remove opportunity is to unite by joining or forming or supporting a **Neighborhood Watch** program. Get to know your neighbors today and start looking out for one another. Learn about crime prevention techniques and exchange information and REPORT all suspicious and criminal activities.

This triangle is in your hands. It can be broken.

**The CHOICE is YOURS!**

To start a Neighborhood Watch program in your community, call the Sully District Crime Prevention Office at 703-814-7018.

(Information from <http://www.nwatch.net.my/article.cfm?id=97>)